



# Benewah County

October 2008

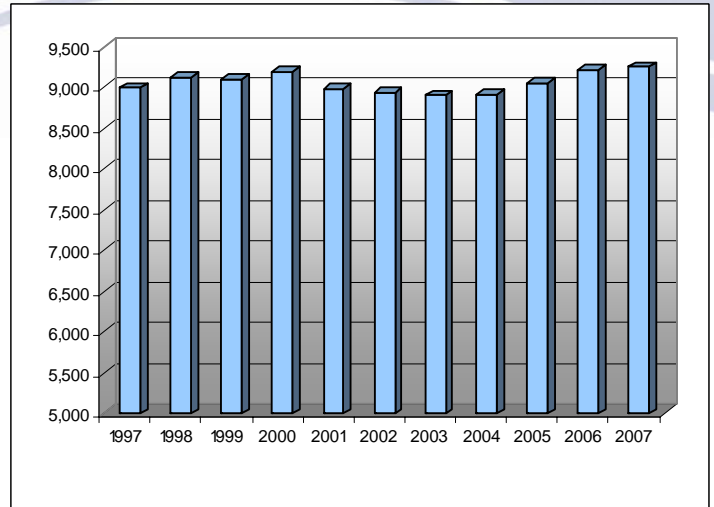
## Work Force Trends

### Population

Benewah County experienced fairly strong population growth in the early 1990s. Its rural lifestyle and great hunting and fishing opportunities persuaded many people to move there. Then, the county stagnated for several years. In the last four years, as more retirees have discovered its attractions, its population has been growing again.

From 1997 to 2007, the county's population grew 3 percent from 8,991 to 9,243, while Idaho's population grew 22 percent and the U.S. population grew 11 percent.

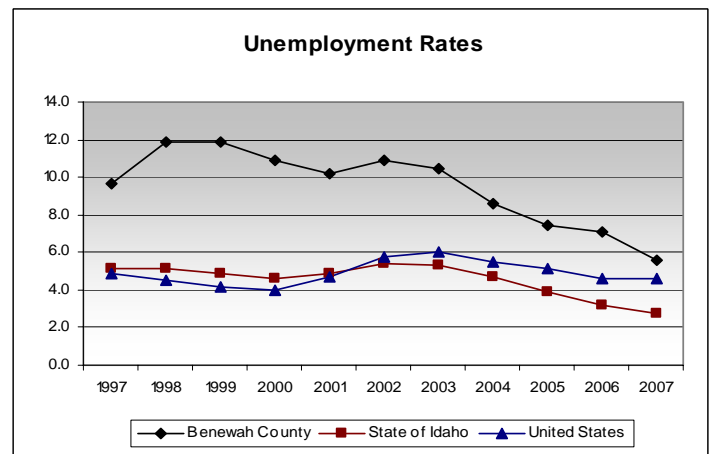
The county seat, St. Maries, had a population of 2,624 in 2007, while Plummer has a population of 981 and Tensed, 125.



### Labor Force & Employment

Benewah County's economy remains heavily dependent on forest products. More than one in four jobs are in the forest products industry. Until 2006, the county had only 60 jobs in manufacturing outside of forest products. In 2006, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe purchased Berg Integrated Systems and moved it to Plummer, where it now employs about 80 people. Despite the county's beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities, its tourism sector employs fewer than 200 people. Dependence on forest products makes the county vulnerable to high unemployment when U.S. housing construction falls. Since the summer of 2006, low lumber prices have reduced employment opportunities in the county.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe, whose reservation extends from western Benewah County into southern Kootenai County, has been the main engine of growth in the last 10 years. Today, it employs 540 people at its headquarters,



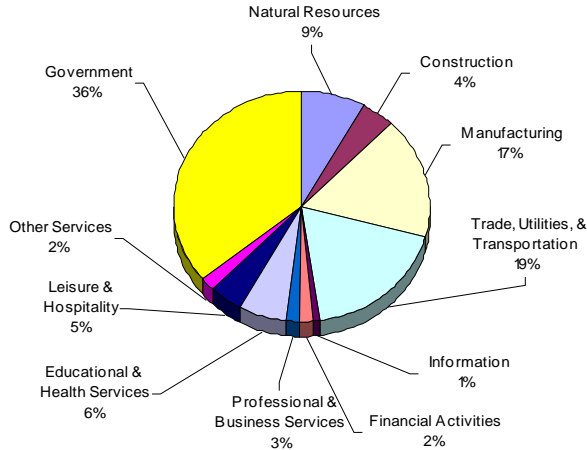
retail stores, medical clinic, farm, school, and Berg plant in Benewah County and nearly 1,000 people at its casino, hotel, and golf course in Worley, just over the county line.

Because so much of the county's income is from forests and farms, employment peaks in late summer and drops off as winter approaches. Employment falls to its lowest level in spring when load limitations are placed on muddy roads, forcing many loggers out of work. In 2007, for example, the unadjusted unemployment rate peaked at 9.4 percent in March and fell to 3.1 percent in September.

Labor Force	Sep 2007	Sep 2008
Civilian Labor Force	3,882	4,035
Total Employment	3,674	3,700
Unemployed	208	335
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.4	8.3
State of Idaho % Unemployed	2.7	5.0
U.S. % Unemployed	4.7	6.1

Labor Force	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Civilian Labor Force	4,361	4,517	4,421	4,003	4,029	4,008	3,943	3,990	4,003	3,905	3,942
Unemployment	425	538	528	435	409	438	413	344	297	277	220
% of Labor Force Unemployed	9.7	11.9	11.9	10.9	10.2	10.9	10.5	8.6	7.4	7.1	5.6
Employment	3,936	3,979	3,893	3,568	3,620	3,570	3,530	3,646	3,705	3,628	3,722

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2007



## Economic Development Efforts

Benewah County is struggling to overcome a legacy of economic stagnation, which has hampered business growth. The number of private-sector businesses with employees in Benewah County edged down from 316 in 1997 to 306 in 2007.

Timber Plus, the county's economic development organization, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe are making strenuous efforts to recruit businesses and expand job opportunities by making the area more attractive to tourists and potential residents.

### Major Employers

Benewah Community Hospital
Berg Integrated Systems
Coeur d'Alene Tribe
Jack A. Buell Trucking
Peet Shoe Dryer (manufacturer)
Potlatch Corp.
Stimson Lumber (Plummer & St. Maries)
Valley Vista Care (nursing home & corp. HQ)

### Occupational Wages\*

### Starting Wage

Bookkeepers, Full-charge	\$8.75
Carpenters, Journey-level	\$15.00
Cashiers/Checkers	\$7.25
Clerks, General Office	\$7.75
Clerks, Retail	\$7.25
Cooks, Restaurant	\$8.00
Janitors	\$7.75
Laborers, Construction	\$10.00
Loggers	\$15.50
Millwrights	\$17.40
Nurses, Registered	\$18.50
Sawmill Workers	\$13.75
Secretaries, General	\$8.50
Truck Drivers, Heavy	\$15.75

\* Additional Occupational Wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor Web site at [lmi.idaho.gov](http://lmi.idaho.gov).

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 1997, 2006, & 2007	1997		2006		2007	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	3,551	\$23,663	3,548	\$30,954	3,640	\$32,065
Agriculture	361	\$27,661	297	\$36,333	269	\$39,831
Mining	*	*	*	*	65	\$32,071
Construction	117	\$23,538	170	\$27,007	152	\$26,827
Manufacturing	671	\$32,963	562	\$45,036	622	\$44,808
Trade, Utilities, & Transportation	615	\$22,801	650	\$29,169	687	\$29,903
Information	34	\$20,569	31	\$24,374	31	\$24,343
Financial Activities	91	\$16,174	50	\$20,052	48	\$20,686
Professional and Business Services	131	\$25,023	57	\$22,028	66	\$23,738
Educational and Health Services	268	\$20,963	219	\$22,609	221	\$25,534
Leisure and Hospitality	213	\$5,975	159	\$7,383	150	\$7,935
Other Services	164	\$14,055	53	\$27,047	49	\$32,655
Government	719	\$22,321	1,248	\$30,359	1,279	\$31,005

Per Capita Income	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Benewah County	\$18,912	\$19,100	\$19,703	\$20,215	\$21,711	\$21,226	\$21,800	\$23,690	\$24,531	\$25,911
State of Idaho	\$20,648	\$21,789	\$22,786	\$24,077	\$25,024	\$25,221	\$25,524	\$27,361	\$28,301	\$29,920
United States	\$25,334	\$26,883	\$27,939	\$29,843	\$30,574	\$30,821	\$31,504	\$33,123	\$34,757	\$36,714

Information provided by U.S. Census Bureau



This county is served by the office located at the address below:  
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This publication is produced by Idaho Department of Labor funded at least in part by federal grants from the U.S. Department of Labor.

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